

May

Be Sure to **LOOK** for those Buttons and
roll-over effects

Magic Lantern Society **NEWS**



Test our Acrobat and gently encourage him to vault over the post
can you find out how?



Many articles are not the complete information in this
E-Pub. Continued information is available on line and
the links are here to help navigate to those sites.



Projecting the Past
into the Future

15th International Convention

JUNE 21-24
2012
Tacoma Washington

Magic Lanterns by the Numbers

Kentwood D. Wells

The rapid expansion of various sorts of digital resources available to scholars opens up new opportunities for quantitative analyses of data in all sorts of fields. A recent paper in *Science* by Michel et al. (2011) attracted considerable attention in the academic community and the press.¹ These authors used a database derived from more than 5 million books in several languages that have been scanned by Google Books. These represent about 4% all books ever published. The complete database comprised over 500 billion words, including more than 360 billion in English. Using a variety of computer programs, the authors searched this database for key words, such as “slavery” or “The Great War” to chart changing patterns of word use over time, focusing on the period from 1800 to 2000. The claim is that this sort of analysis can provide new insights into social science and history, and the authors gave the ambitious and somewhat unpronounceable name of “Culturomics” to this field of study.

Using a program supplied with the online version of this article, I applied the analysis to terms related to the magic lantern to explore how use of these terms changed over time. Each of the resulting graphs shows a relative index of word-use frequency relative to the total number of instances the word appears in the data base. A smoothing function was applied to the data to provide a more readable result (in other words, the data are not plotted year-by-year, but are presented as running averages over periods of several years, depending on the scale of the graph).

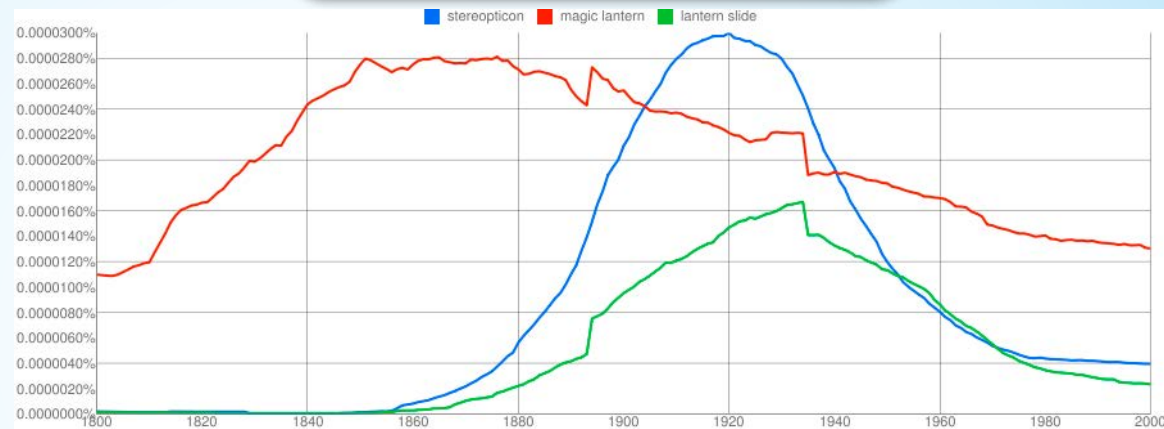


Fig. 1. Relative frequency of occurrence of the words “magic lantern,” “stereopticon,” and “lantern slide” in the Google Books database from 1800 to 2000. A 20-year smoothing function was applied to the data.

I first analyzed the relative frequency of the words “magic lantern,” “stereopticon,” and “lantern slide” in the Google Books database from 1800 to 2000 (Fig. 1). The graph shows that use of the word “magic lantern” was most common until about 1900, when it was surpassed by “stereopticon.” This analysis confirms results of my earlier survey of American periodicals in showing that the term “stereopticon” first appeared in 1860.² The term “lantern slide” was not commonly used until after 1860, with the arrival of photographic lantern slides, and peaked in the 1930s, before the advent of 35 mm slides. A somewhat surprising result is the persistence of all of these words, especially “magic lantern,” into the late years of the 20th century, long after the instruments themselves had disappeared. Some of these results need to be interpreted with caution, however. First, the Google Books database includes all manner of publications, including books, random periodicals, technical publications, etc. Often there are multiple editions of the same publication, which tends to inflate the numbers. Second, many of the references to these terms after 1920 or so represent historical references or metaphorical references in literature. The term “magic lantern” also may show up in items such as Magic Lantern photography guides.

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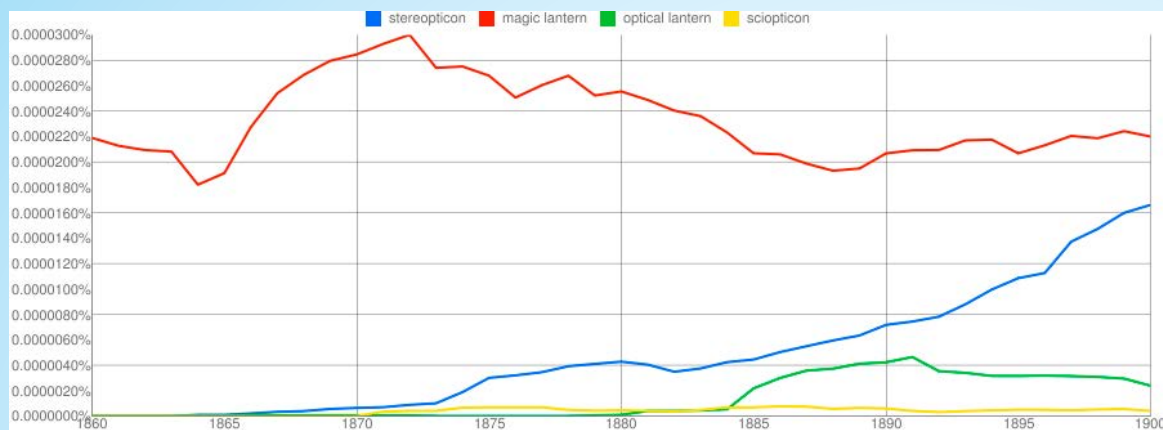


Fig. 2. Relative frequency of occurrence of the words “magic lantern,” “stereopticon,” “optical lantern,” and “scopticon” in the Google Books database from 1860 to 1900. A 3-year smoothing function was applied to the data.

In my second analysis, I limited the time period covered to the years 1860 to 1900 and searched for four terms commonly applied to lanterns: “magic lantern,” “stereopticon,” “optical lantern,” and “scopticon.” Because of the shorter time period, the values in the graph were averaged over 3 years, so the shapes of the curves are different. Again, “magic lantern” remains the most common term, with “stereopticon” appearing in the 1860s and rising steadily through 1900. The term “optical lantern” came into general use much later and was used much less frequently, and the term “scopticon” hardly found its way into the literature at all. These results again largely confirm patterns derived from my earlier analysis of American periodicals.

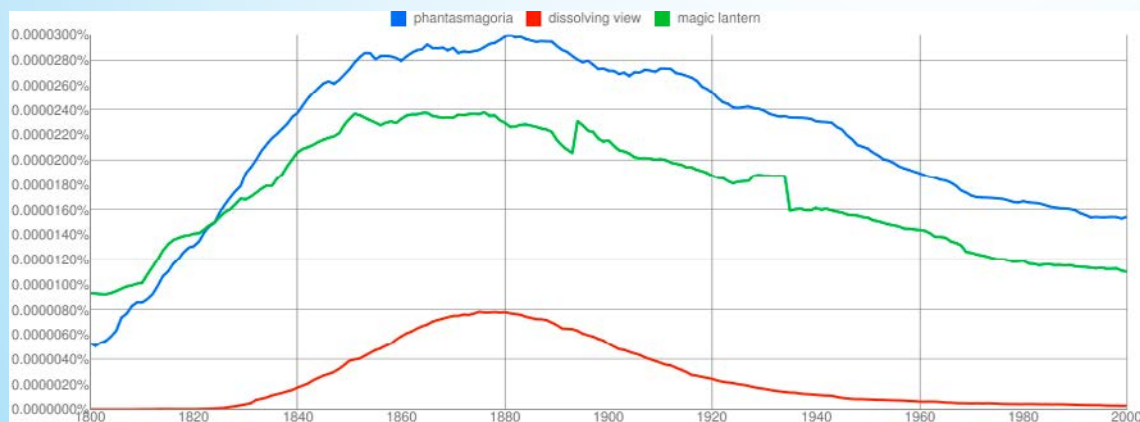


Fig. 3. Relative frequency of occurrence of three terms related to magic lanterns that often appear as literary metaphors in books and periodicals. A 20-year smoothing function was applied to the data.

My final analysis looked at three terms that commonly appear as metaphors in literary works: “magic lantern,” “dissolving view,” and “phantasmagoria.” Here, the term “phantasmagoria” is the one most frequently used, from the 1830s all the way through to 2000. What is particularly notable in this graph is the long “afterlife” of the word “phantasmagoria,” which actually was more commonly used after 1840 than in the previous decades when phantasmagoria shows were in vogue. Of course, this term has taken on many different meanings in modern literature.³ Not surprisingly, the term “dissolving view” did not appear until around 1830 and dropped off rather rapidly after 1900.

In conclusion, this new method of quantitative analysis reveals some interesting changes over time in the use of keywords related to the magic lantern. These patterns are largely consistent with a finer-scale analysis done previously using the American Periodicals database. For detailed information, the latter approach, although more time-consuming, probably yields more useful information, because it is possible to read each article included in the analysis to determine how the words are used. Many of the books in the Google Books database are scanned, but not all are available for free full-text reading by the public. The sheer number of items included in the Google Books database also makes checking of individual sources a somewhat overwhelming task.

References

1. J.-P. Michel et al. 2011. Quantitative analysis of culture using millions of digitized books. *Science* 331:176-182. <http://www.sciencemag.org/content/331/6014/176.full.html>
2. Kentwood D. Wells. 2008. What’s in a name? The magic lantern and the stereopticon in American periodicals 1860-1900. *The Magic Lantern Gazette* 20 (3):3-19.
3. Terry Castle. 1988. Phantasmagoria: spectral technology and the metaphors of modern reverie. *Critical Inquiry* 15:6-61.

Magic Lantern Slides: Woodburytype



Basket of Mischief, by Sarony

Woodburytype

Lantern Slides are basically marks applied on a transparent or translucent material such that light can be projected through them to form an image on a screen.

Lantern slides work because transparent materials allow light to be projected through them to form an image on a screen.

Magic.

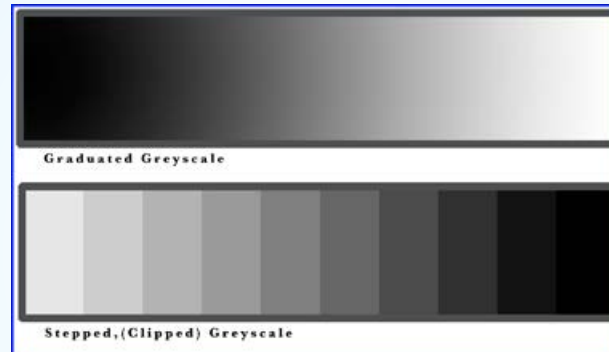
There are many different ways of applying those marks, and many different types of Magic Lantern slide. Pretty well every article I read about Woodburytypes refers to their special beauty, and many articles decry its demise in favor of cheaper photomechanical printing techniques. Cheaper trounces beauty.

Identifying Magic Lantern Slides: Woodburytype

By Michael Lawlor

Woodburytype

A photomechanical process invented by Walter Bentley Woodbury (1834-1885). Patented in 1865, Woodburytypes were used to print high quality books and Magic Lantern slides. Although in use



Grey Scale Comparison



Woodburytype Hand Colored Cherry Blossoms



Niagara Falls Woodburytype Glass Slide

until 1905, this process was superseded around 1890, when screen-printing was perfected, allowing for simultaneous printing of both image and text.

Screen-printing simulates tonal values by interspersing white spaces with dark ink, with lighter areas having more white spaces than dark tones. It is a flat, or planar, single color printing process. (Full-color prints can be made by printing four different color screens for each picture.)

A Woodburytype is a three dimensional, or intaglio, print. A mold is made by exposing light sensitive gelatin through a negative for about four hours in sunlight. Light sensitive gelatin hardens on exposure to light, and stays correspondingly soft as it is exposed to less light from darker negative

continued next page

Woodburytype continued



Our Expedition, Woodburytype glass slide

areas. Development consists of washing away softer areas so a hard gelatin mold remains. From this a printing mold is made by pressing it into lead at 5,000 lbs. pressure per square inch. This lead is then filled with pigmented gelatin and pressed onto a printing surface. Note that this means, despite appearance, a Woodbury is not a photograph containing silver that can deteriorate, but a photomechanical reproduction made with stable gelatin and carbon pigments. Areas where ink is thickest because of mold depth show darker tones than do thinner ink levels. Loupe examinations do not show screening or photographic grain and tonal values flow smoothly from dark to light without clipping.



Woodbury Labels

Identifying a Woodburytype glass slide

Labels

Woodburytypes were manufactured by companies that bought a license for it. It was an expensive process to set up, requiring high-pressure presses, so only those who could afford any necessary capital investment were able to apply it. It a high volume production process and was not suitable for most amateurs.

In America, Woodburytype lantern slides were produced by "The American Photo Relief Company" from 1870 to 1878. In England they were produced by "Woodbury Permanent Photographic Printing Company," and "Sciopticon".

"Waterlow and Sons" and "The Autotype Company" of England, "Goupil et Cie." in France, and "Adolph Braun" in Switzerland, were also publishers of Woodburytypes, but I do not know if they made lantern slides. "M. de Parader" was a Woodburytype Patent holder in British Columbia, Canada.

Formats

Woodburytype slides were produced in two formats. England's format was their standard 3.25 X 3.25 inch size. In America they were made on 3.25 X 4.25 inch glass. (Yep, those oversize slides that do not quite fit into your standard slide holder are Woodburytypes. My guess is that this was to help promote Sciopticon brand Magic Lanterns, which Woodbury introduced to England because of their high quality and research into better lighting via multi-wick lanterns.) Glass stereoviews were also manufactured with Woodbury's process.

continued next page

Woodburytype continued



Woodburytype Emulsion Texture

Visual

“Described by many as ‘the most beautiful photographic reproduction process ever invented’”¹ your first visual indication of a Woodburytype slide is a very high quality image, with rich detailed dark tones, fully graduated tonality through to light areas, with no clipping.

When its emulsion is looked at through an obtuse angle reflection you will see lines indicating changes in emulsion thickness much like lines in a topographic map, separating high areas from low, or light areas from dark. Woodburytype emulsion is textured, not flat. (See illustration.) They are easier to see than to photograph because they can only be seen in reflecting light.

Color is most commonly dark brown or purple, but can vary depending on what pigments were used in preparing gelatin inks. I do have some hand-colored Woodburytypes, but have not seen or read about any others.

You can often, even on a reduced thumbnail image, distinguish a Woodburytype by its richer tonality and detail when compared with photographic, painted or chromolithograph slides.



Woodburytype Emulsion Texture

References:

A History of the Woodburytype, by Barret Oliver. Pub: Carl Mautz Publishing, Nevada City, California, 2006.

Encyclopedia of the Magic Lantern, editors: David Robinson, Stephen Herbert, Richard Crangle. Pub: The Magic Lantern Society, London, 2001.

⁽¹⁾ *Encyclopedia of Printing, Photographic and Photomechanical Processes*, by Luis Nadeau. Pub: Atelier Luis Nadeau, Fredericton, NB, Canada, 1989.

http://www.photoconservation.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=49:woodbury&catid=36:photomechanical&Itemid=58

Questions, corrections and more information:

please email Michael Lawlor

mclawlor@gmail.com

I am particularly looking for information on Woodburytype Magic Lantern slides, since most articles refer to prints on paper and do not contain much information about lantern slides.

Pictures of labels listing publishers would be nice.

Michael C. Lawlor
Vancouver, BC, Canada
<http://www.mclawlor.ca>

What's New on the Magic Lantern Research Group?

The Magic Lantern Research Group is a group library and bibliography of resources for magic lantern research. It can be accessed at: https://www.zotero.org/groups/magic_lantern_research_group. It is best viewed using Mozilla Firefox as your web browser.

The Group Library now contains a comprehensive bibliography of scholarly journal articles on the magic lantern and related topics published from the 1970s to the present, including most of the articles published in the New Magic Lantern Journal (bibliographic citations only). These are organized in sub-files by topic (Magic Lantern History, Magic Lanterns and Science, Toy Magic Lanterns, etc.). There also is a new direct link to the San Diego State University Library site that contains PDFs of all back issues of the The Magic Lantern Gazette and Bulletin, up to 2009. You also can link directly to this site at: http://scua.sdsu.edu/magic_lantern/index.shtml. Online versions of the Gazette will be added to this site at the end of each volume (the 2010 volume is not yet complete). PDFs of recent individual research articles from The Magic Lantern Gazette can be accessed on the Magic Lantern Research Group page by members of the Research Group (there are now 23 members). For directions on how to join as a member of the Magic Lantern Research Group, email kentwood.wells@uconn.edu. Note: During peak hours, the Zotero server that hosts the Magic Lantern Research Group can be slow to load and may require a couple of attempts to access the information.

Member Unexpected Find

From Sharon Koch

Most of us have experienced the thrill of an unexpected “find”, during our search for magic lanterns and slides. Mine took place in March when my friend, Shel Izen, sent a notice from eBay to take a look at a lighthouse slide for sale. I decided that this image would be a nice addition to my collection, made a bid, and was happy to win the auction the next day, without having to even increase my initial bid! I received the slide in a few days and decided to do a little research on the Bell Rock Lighthouse, as it was identified on the Artistic Gems slide. When I googled the name, I was surprised to see a lot of “hits”.

Upon reading about the Lighthouse, I discovered that my slide was an image of the painting by Joseph Mallord William Turner who did the watercolor in 1819. But that wasn't all! I read that this particular

lighthouse, located 12 miles off the coast of Scotland, is 200 years, 2 months of age and is the world's oldest surviving sea-washed lighthouse. Because the Bell Rocks are only

above sea level at low tide, all the construction had to take place during just a few hours each day. The building took from 1807 to 1811 to finish. The masonry work on which the lighthouse stands was built to such high standards, it has never had to be replaced or adapted in 200 years. It has been described as one of the Seven Wonders of the Industrial World!

Sir Walter Scott wrote a poem after inspecting Bell Rock in 1814, and several songs have been written about this famous site. I think that if the seller had known the history associated with this image, he would have charged me a little more! His loss, my gain!



Society Member Show

From THOMAS H. SUTTER

I recently took 90 lantern slides of Norway and made a presentation to the local Sons of Norway lodge. I have about 2,000 slides and noted that there were all of these of Norway. Collectors love to share their collections as much as they love to collect them. Having no prior knowledge of Norway, I first had to figure out where each was located on the map. In that process I discovered the amazing geology and geography of Norway. I then did my research to write my script for the presentation. I scanned the slides into a Power Point format. There were three parts of the presentation. The first featured a tour of the country and was titled "Some Places of Norway." The next part was titled "Some People of Norway" and we concluded with "Some Waterfalls of Norway." The audience was most receptive and enjoyed seeing places they had either visited or heard about. The audience was also interested in glass lantern slides and their history. All in all it was a great deal of work to put the presentation together but was a most gratifying way to share a part of the collection.



View of the Naerodal valley

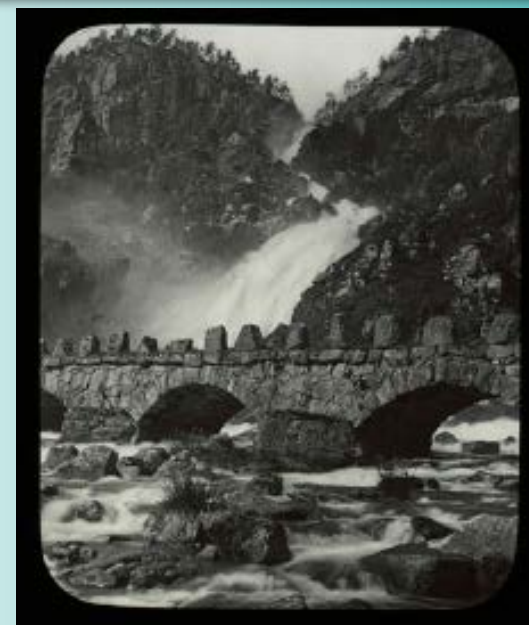
Recently, I was able to purchase and contribute to Lawrence University here in Appleton, a set of 34 lantern slides from the 1930's which had been used in their recruiting at the time. They were a wonderful addition to the University's archives.

I use Wilson "Snowflake" Bentley lantern slides in my school presentations on this fascinating Vermont farmer who first photographed individual snow crystals.

Finally, in October I have been invited to put some of my photographs and lantern slides into a visual accompaniment to the Green Bay Civic Orchestra's performance of Ferde Grofe's "Grand Canyon Suite."



Hardanger Bridal Costume



Lotefos waterfall and bridge



Rjukanfos

Request For Information

Magic Lantern Slides of Bernier Canadian Arctic Expeditions

Any information about the provenance of these slides from your members would be appreciated.

**Thank you and regards,
Mac Williamson and Brenda Kennedy**

We have learned much about these slides and expeditions and have many leads to check out including Archives Canada, McCord Museum of Montreal, Maritime Museum of Quebec, Arctic institute at the University of Calgary and the Geological Survey of Canada who may have copies of the Geodetic survey slides. So far we have seen some photos from the same expeditions but no duplicates. Some collections have been digitized.

Joseph Bernier was the captain from a seafaring family and also ran the prisons in Quebec.

That CGS Arctic was a 100meter long wooden German built three masted coal fired boat that could hold 400 tons of coal and was originally built to go to Antarctica. After this it was bought by Canada to perform expeditions to find the Franklin expedition, map and claim the Arctic for Canada(England gave it to us). Install RCMP posts, collect taxes from whalers, install trading posts and look for gold and other valuable minerals. We think that some of the native people are Northern Cree, possibly from James Bay while others including the guides may be Inuit. The little coffin shaped houses may



To view the slides see link below

Here is the link. <http://www.brendakennedy.ca/mac/>

You will need in lower case:

User name: mac

Pass word: brenda

be burial houses. In those days men took country(native) wives and in deed would have perished with out them. Many can trace there roots to these explorers.

Email any information to:

macnbrenda@gmail.com

Request From Member

From Laura Zotti

Dear Ron,
I have an american slide and I am looking for the subject, it seems Garibaldi but I'm not sure.

Can anyone help me, please?

My kindest regards

Laura

Museo del PRECINEMA
Collezione Minici Zotti
tel. 049 8763838
www.miniczotti.it



As Seen On



Watching magic lantern items on eBay can be very entertaining!
Obviously we still need to continue the education of what magic lanterns are about!

May be a new way to assemble a magic lantern?



Actually 2x2 35mm slides



VINTAGE MAGIC LANTERN GLASS SLIDES

Ended: Mar 22, 2011 12:15:59 PDT

Bid history: 0 bids

Starting bid: US \$9.99

Item location: Angus, Ontario

*** Up for auction we have 11 VINTAGE MAGIC LANTERN GLASS SLIDES DEPICTING THE CRUCIFIXION OF JESUS CHRIST. I purchased these metal slides at an estate auction that I attended about 20 years ago. They are in good condition with only one having a crack. One slide is colored the rest are black and white. Unique additions to any collection!



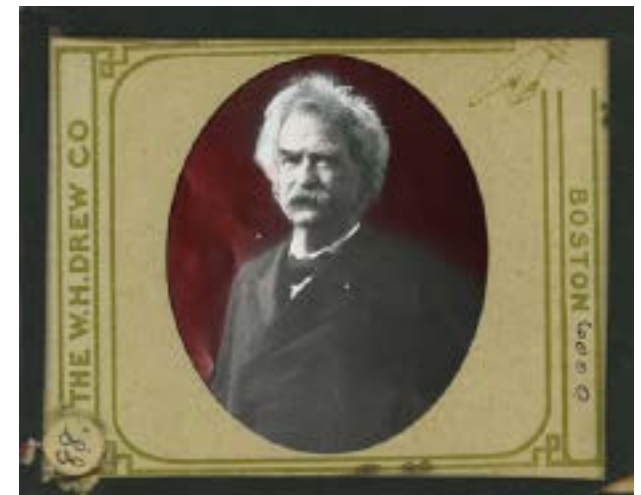
Might help if the seller checked what slides are selling for!



Magic Lantern Glass Slide Young Abraham Lincoln

Price: US \$750.00

Buy It Now Buy It Now



Mark Twain in a Lantern Slide by Drew of Boston

Price: US \$500.00

Buy It Now Buy It Now

Northeastern Group

Special Meeting

The Northeastern Group of the Magic Lantern Society of the United States and Canada will meet **Saturday, June 25 from 10AM-5PM** **Dodd Research Center at the University of Connecticut in Storrs, Connecticut.**

The meeting will coincide with the opening of an exhibit in the Dodd Center curated by Kentwood Wells, “**Magic Lantern Nights: the Projected Image in 19th Century America**”, which will be open from **June 20-September 30, 2011**. The exhibit will include a brief history of the magic lantern and will focus on the magic lantern in America, with examples of American-made lanterns such as the Marcy sciopticon, as well as toy lanterns imported into the United States. Various types of slides will be exhibited, along with printed material such as trade cards, Christmas cards, political cartoons, and illustrations featuring the magic lantern. Members of the society in New England and the northeastern states are invited to attend and are encouraged to bring friends who may be interested.

We will have a small conference room available for the meeting, equipped with a screen to allow lantern slides to be shown. Please bring an interesting new item to show or a set of slides to project. Terry Borton will have his biunial lantern available for slide showing. Presentations are very informal. We will make arrangements for lunch. In the afternoon, we will take a break for a public reception for the exhibit, with light refreshments provided by the Dodd Center. Often these exhibit-opening receptions are lightly attended, especially in the summer, but we will get free refreshments and will have a chance to look at the exhibit in detail, while having a number of magic lantern experts available to discuss the exhibit with members of the public. Please mark your calendars and try to attend this special meeting. If you plan to attend, contact **Terry Borton (tborton@magiclanternshows.com)**. Directions will be sent to those planning to attend the meeting.



**If you in the area during May
Please join us!**

**Meeting at Shapes
Sat, May 21**

Potluck, show and tell
and discussion of
coming events

If you need directions and a map email **Larry**

**We will be sharing information
about the 2012
convention preparation**

From Michael Lawlor

Upcoming Magic Lantern Shows and Exhibitions

May 7, 2011

Prints from Canadian Pacific Railway Magic Lantern Slides at Burnaby Village Museum, Burnaby, BC. Until August. (This exhibition has been seen in 11 Art Galleries and Museums across Canada since 2007.)

May 7, 2011

Exhibition of Magic Lanterns and ephemera at Burnaby Village Museum, Burnaby, BC. Until August.

May 12, 2011

Lantern Slides of Vancouver, with Civic Historian John Atkins, at Cinematique for DOXA, a documentary film festival in Vancouver.

Check out this link to the film festival site for more information
http://www.doxafestival.ca/festival/films/magic_lantern.html

June 8, 2011

Magic Lantern History, a Magic Lantern Show of different types of lantern slides and special effects. For Burnaby Village Museum Historical Society, at Willingdon Branch of Burnaby Public Library, Burnaby, BC.

Check out this link to the City of Burnaby site for more information
http://www.burnaby.ca/cityhall/departments/departments_parks/prksrc_artsan/prksrc_fcfts_brnbyv/bvmprograms/

September, 2011

Exhibition of canvas prints from magic lantern slides depicting Farming in Canada. Stewart Heritage Farm, Surrey, BC.

Welcome New Members

Rob Blackson

919 E Passyunk Ave
Apt 1R
Philadelphia, PA 19147-2924
robert.blackson@temple.edu
Curator. Interests: Chromotrope

Member

Change of Contact Information

Bob Gregory

522 Carolyn Court
Cary, NC 27511
bobgregorymail@gmail.com

A Big Thank You to the following:

Mark Butterworth
Ron Easterday **Sharon Koch**
Michael Lawlor **Thomas H. Sutter**
Kentwood D. Wells **Laura Zotti**
for contributing to this months issue.

Now it's your turn to share!

Do you have a favorite site or a collection of images you would like to share with the rest of the society?
If your answer is yes! Send site information or your images to Larry and they will be shared in the next E-pub newsletter.

E-mail Larry

From Sharon Koch Check out this Mondern Day Chromatope



<http://inoyan.narod.ru/kaleidoskop.swf>

At site mouse over Image to change.



Solution to page 1 Acrobat

• Click slide image • Go to word gently and click
• Click on slide image to go back to first image. The magic of a slip slide.

A wonderful webpage (in Spanish) on magic lanterns and other pre-cinema devices

<http://www.uhu.es/cine.educacion/cineyeducacion/cineprecine.htm>

